

**Testimony in SUPPORT of SB284:**  
**“An Act Increasing the Age from Eight to Eighteen Years for an Income-Eligible Person to Obtain Medical Assistance Regardless of Immigration Status”**

Dear Members of the Human Services Committee of Connecticut General Assembly:

My name is Nishant Pandya and I am a pediatrician from New Haven, Connecticut who cares for children living from all parts of Connecticut.

I stand in support of SB284: AN ACT INCREASING THE AGE FROM EIGHT TO EIGHTEEN YEARS FOR AN INCOME-ELIGIBLE PERSON TO OBTAIN MEDICAL ASSISTANCE REGARDLESS OF IMMIGRATION STATUS. Expanding access to HUSKY up to age 18 regardless of immigration status is an important step in making sure our immigrant community has access to the healthcare we all need and deserve. But our work doesn't end with expanding access up to age 18; we need to open access to HUSKY and healthcare to all immigrants of any age, including parents and adults.

This bill provides all children the ability to lead healthy and safe lives in order to become the adults they are meant to become. Serious medical conditions do not spare children based off immigration status. It is not only our moral obligation to care for children in our state whose families are part of the Connecticut community but also an investment in health today that will contribute to a healthier generation of adults in Connecticut.

This bill will have positive downstream gains for children. Children's health directly impacts their ability to participate in school and education. Increasing health insurance for this population can improve their attendance rate, performance, and educational attainment at school.<sup>1</sup>

I support S.B. 284, and I ask the committee to support and pass this legislation. Looking forward, I ask the committee to work towards opening access to all community members in CT regardless of age or status.

Thank you for your time,

Nishant Pandya MD MPH

- 1) Ku, Leighton, et al. “Chartbook: Improving Children's Health - the Roles of Medicaid and Schip.” *Research*, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, 1 Jan. 2007, <https://www.cbpp.org/research/chartbook-improving-childrens-health-the-roles-of-medicaid-and-schip>.